GOD's *Faithfulness a ſure ground of Hope and Comfort to believers, both living and dying.*

A SERMON

Occaſioned by the much-lamented Death of the

Rev. JOHN CONDER, D. D.

Who departed this Life, May 30, 1781, in the 67th Year of his Age.

Preached at his late Meeting-Houſe, Moorfields.

By Rev. JAMES WEBB.

Printed for MARGARET PUNTON, a poor Widow, with Three ſmall Children, who has no other Way to ſupport them, but by ſelling this little Book.

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W. Musgrave.

To the Christian READER

I Have been afflicted these several years past with a slow fever in my head, that it comes so violent by times, that it almost entirely deprives me of my hearing. I had several medicines, but to no Benefit. I have of late been recommended to try Freeman's Bathing Spirits from which I have found great benefit, (thanks be to God for it). I have not had my hearing so well these seven years past, and hope with the blessing of God, would obtain a perfect cure by the said drops; but being so much oppressed with a small family, and buying of the books, that I cannot afford to continue them.

I hope the courteous reader will consider my case, buy this little book, or keep it clean till called for.

If any one doubts the truth of this, it can be attested, as I am always with the child, and as a further proof, I live at No. 2, Turks head-Court, Turnmill-Street, Clerkenwell, where the truth of these few lines may be certified. It is hoped the kind Reader will be careful who they return this book to, as no one belongs to it but the child or me; and any one who is so kind as to buy this little book, it will be most thankfully received by

MARGARET PUNTON

I. THESSALONIANS V. 24.

"*Faithful is He that calleth you, who alſo will do it.*"

DEATH, my dear friends, makes a wide and irrecoverable breach between the deareſt friends. The moſt intimate friendſhip, and every tye, and relation is diſſolved—for ever diſſolved here.—The tears of love and friendſhip may a little relieve the mourner, but can never heal the wound, (I mean, recover the dead). My dear deceaſed brother, and you of the church, my friends, have requeſted of me this (ſhall I call it) laſt office of love. But permit me to ſay, the conſideration of our

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long, our intimate, our unſhaken friendſhip, for near, very near fifty years, as well as my weakneſs and infirmities, make the ſervice very, very painful to me;—but the Lord is my help. The removal of dear friends is not a little affecting, but that of thoſe, who have been eminent and uſeful in the church, and honoured by the Redeemer in his cauſe, muſt needs come cloſe to all our tender feelings. It is true, we are not without our ſources of relief —may the Lord enable us in faith to uſe them, for our ſupport—our ſupport on the preſent ſolemn occaſion! The reſidue of the ſpirit is with the Lord—the cauſe is in CHRIST's hands.

But 2dly, Are you called? firſt, then, admire and adore the Grace, that hath been revealed unto you. Begin, my Brethren, the Song of Sion now. (2dly endeavour to make your calling and election ſure. Preſs after holineſs under the influence of the Spirit (3dly) Take encouragement. "God is faithful." You are weak in the faith, but remember, you have a ſtrong God to ſupport your faith,—a ſtrong Redeemer, who is almighty, and full of Grace, yea Grace and truth, to fulfil the promiſes unto you. Look to the Ground of your faith and hope. And what is that? the love of God, the promiſes of God, the faithfulneſs

fulneſs of God, and the work of Chriſt. Let this ſtir you up to all holineſs of converſation, and godlineſs;—for if this will not, nothing will, nothing can. (4thly) See how to oppoſe the temptations of the adverſary. Many of God's dear Children have been often ready to queſtion, whether they are amongſt them that are choſen and redeemed, becauſe they are not ſatisfied that they are called. But ſurely God hath called you by his Grace, if he has taught you the preciouſneſs of Chriſt, and enabled you to fly to him, as your only hope; if you are looking to him for righteouſneſs, ſtrength, and ſalvation. And, this being the caſe, you will be ready to ſay, how ſhall I do this Evil, and ſin againſt God? Faith upon God in the covenant will ſecure us againſt the worſt, and laſt efforts of our helliſh adverſary. Laſtly, Let us, as helped by Grace, quietly leave ourſelves in the hands of this precious word, "faithful is he that calleth you who will alſo do it" or rather, in *His* hands, who is preſented to us in the text; and commit ourſelves to him with this hope, that he will "guide us by his counſel, and afterwards receive us to his glory."

Permit me now to ſay a few words to the ſurviving Relatives, and my dear young Brethren.

You

You are, my dear friends, called to mour—" hear ye the rod, and who hath appointe it." You are called to " ſorrow, but not as thoſe who have no hope."

In reſpect of my dear brother, conſider the triumphant words of the Apoſtle — " I have fought the good fight, I have finiſhed my courſe I have kept the faith; and henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteouſneſs, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give unto me at that day; and not unto me only, but unto all thoſe that love his appearing." He hath heard, I dare ſay, he hath heard the bleſſed words, " well done good and faithful ſervant, enter thou into the Joy of thy Lord." He hath joined, we doubt not, the Saints, " the Spirits of juſt Men made perfect," and with them now is ſinging the Song of Moſes and the Lamb, " unto him that hath loved us, and waſhed us from our Sins in his own blood, to him be glory for ever and ever."

My dear Madam, your loſs is great—the near and dear relation is diſſolved—may you be helped to look to that relation, which is indiſſoluble! Your heavenly huſband never dies; —you ſhall not want his counſel, his ſupport his comfort, who is the " wonderful counſellor, the mighty God, the everlaſting Father, the

the Prince of peace." The Lord will lay no more upon you then he will enable you to bear. Your God, your Jesus lives;—in His hands your dear Partner left you;—in his hands you are safe. O! bless God, that though you sorrow, you are enabled not to murmur;—you would say, "the Cup which my Father giveth me, shall I not drink it? thy will be done," I open not my mouth.

My dear young friends, your Father, the guide of your youth is gone before,—remember his counsel,—follow him, so far as he hath followed Christ. He hath left an example worthy your Imitation;—He professed the truth as it is in Jesus;—he lived by the faith of of the Son of God, or that truth he professed;—and the Lord was pleased to give him the comfort of the truth in death. And have you had his warnings, his counsels, his instructions, his encouragements in the good ways of the Lord? how awful, how dreadful the thought, how tremendous would it be for him to witness against you at last, and to acquiesce with joy in that tremendous sentence, "depart ye cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels," though late his children! But I am persuaded better things of you.

you. His father is, I truſt, my young friends your Father, his Redeemer your Redeemer, his God your God; and "he is faithful that calleth you, who will alſo do it." Keep cloſe to him, who *is* the guide of your youth;—reſt upon him for his ſpirit, who hath ſaid "I am your God, I will never leave you, never forſake you." May "the God of all Grace fulfil all the good pleaſure of his goodneſs in you, and the work of faith with power!"

To you, my dear friends of the Church and Congregation, what ſhall I ſay? need I ſay be ſenſible of your loſs? I need not: you feel, I know you feel it; but, "remember him who ſpake to you the word of life, the word of God" remember him, ſo as to "follow his faith, and conſider the end of his converſation, Jeſus Chriſt the ſame yeſterday, to-day, and for ever;—be thankful, God hath not ſtripped you hath not left you deſtitute;—he hath given you my dear Brother, the wiſh, the comfort of your late honoured Paſtor;—I ſay it again, he hath given you one, who is beloved by you —who loves you—and is willing to ſpend, and be ſpent for your ſakes —Yea, may I uſe the Apoſtle's words, to "be offered upon the ſacrifice and ſervice of your faith," whoſe holi-

neſs,

neſs, peace, and happineſs are his Joy; and you too ſhall be his Crown at laſt, who are thus called.

One word to you, my dear young Brethren, who were under the Tuition of my much-beloved Brother. You have loſt a kind, a tender friend—a wiſe, an able Inſtructor—one, who was ſolid in Judgment—clear, and perſpicuous in his method—and, ſhall I add? through grace, ſucceſsful in his work. He was perſuaded of, and preſſed the importance of the truths he led you into the knowledge of. May you, my dear Brethren, ever retain a ſenſe of the value and importance of the truths of God! may you feel a glowing love to, and proper zeal for, the Goſpel in this day of coldneſs and indifference!—I believe you feel his loſs, and are tenderly affected;—be much in prayer, my Brethren, that the great Lord of the harveſt would fit ſome other for the ſervice, and direct to ſuch a choice, as may be comfortable to you, and uſeful in the ſervice of the Lord!

Finally, May the Lord direct our hearts into the love of God, and into a patient waiting for our Lord Jeſus! may our faith be anſwerable to his faithfulneſs!

I intended to have closed here, but having received a few thoughts from my worthy Brother, let me beg your patience a little longer, while I mention some things which I have been favoured with.—He saith, "I have endeavoured to recall a few words, which dropped "dropped from his lips, expressive of what "was the constant frame of his soul for a very considerable space of time before his dissolution, viz a *Stedfast unshaken affiance in* "*the grace, faithfulness, and love of a Covenant* "*God in Christ—an assurance of the truth of* "*that Gospel, which he had uniformly preached* "and *a lively hope of a blessed Immortality,* "*through the mediation and intercession of the* "*great Redeemer.*—Some months; I believe it "might be full a twelve-month, before he "was laid aside from his public work, he was "conversing with me on the great Importance "of Evangelical Doctrines, and with a peculiar degree of emphasis and affection told me "he "*had attained the full assurance of Faith*; "for, after searching the Scriptures with the "closest attention and care; *he had not a doubt* "*or scruple, respecting the truth of any of those* "*grand fundamental doctrines he had preached* "*and lived upon*:" exhorting me at the same

"time

" time, to continue ſtedfaſt in them, as he was
" ſure nothing elſe would build up the Church
" of Chriſt, or adminiſter ſupport to my own
" Soul. When it pleaſed the Lord to viſit him
" with a paralytic ſtroke, a few weeks before
" his diſſolution, calling upon him, and being
" much affected with his ſituation, he ſaid to
" me, "*well, my dear Brother, it is now over*
" *with me for this life; I muſt leave you to take*
" *care of the Church, and doubt not but the Lord*
" *will be with you. How long I may have to*
" *ſuffer in this way, ere I get my diſmiſſion, I*
" *cannot ſay, and deſire to leave—but I bleſs*
" *God, I can ſay with* Dr. Groſvenor, *that I*
" *have no doubt all things are rightly ſettled be-*
" *tween me and my maſter; and all that I am*
" *now concerned about, is, to take a decent fare-*
" *well of the World.*"—At another time, when
I viſited him, with his uſual cheerfulneſs he
told me, that *had he his life to ſpend over a-*
gain, he would preach the ſame Goſpel, for it
was the truth of God; and, that *he would*
neither change Goſpel nor State, with any one.
Frequently alſo, when I enquired about the
frame of his mind, he told me, that, *tho'*
he did not enjoy thoſe bright manifeſtations,
which ſome had been favoured with, he had an

" *unwavering*

" *unwavering confidence in God as his God*—*wa*
" *carried above all doubts reſpecting his Intere*
" *in the love of Chriſt*—*and had no fears as*
" *the Conſequences of Death, though he ofte*
" *dreaded the Pains of dying.*—On the mornin
" of the day in which he was ſeized with th
" immediate ſtroke of death, hearing the bel
" of Hackney ringing, he aſked why they run
" ſo? and being anſwered that it was the Re
" ſtoration-day, he ſaid, "*I think it will be m*
" *Reſtoration-day.*"—Upon the whole, fro
" what I myſelf heard him declare, and fro
" what others have related to me, it did n
" appear, that he had ever the leaſt waverin
" in his confidence towards God, but a ſtron
" well eſtabliſhed faith and hope, both as t
" the great Doctrines he had preached, an
" his own Intereſt in the Bleſſings of the Go
" pel.

F I N I S.